#### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	)	
Plaintiff,	)	
v.	) No.	
SMITH AND WESSON, M&P 9 SHIELD PISTOL, SERIAL NO. HMU3526;	) ) )	
Defendant.	)	

# VERIFIED COMPLAINT OF FORFEITURE IN REM

COMES NOW, Plaintiff the United States of America, by and through its attorneys, Jeffrey B. Jensen, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri, and Stephen Casey, Assistant United States Attorney, for said district, and for its Verified Complaint for Forfeiture states as follows:

# Nature of the Action and the Defendant In Rem

- 1. This is a civil action *in rem* brought by the United States of America seeking forfeiture of all right, title, and interest in the above-captioned defendant property pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 881(a)(11) and Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(d).
- 2. The defendant property was seized by law enforcement on or about January 19, 2018 and is described more fully as one Smith and Wesson M&P 9 Shield pistol, SN: HMU3526 (the "defendant property").

#### Jurisdiction and Venue

3. This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1345 and 1355, and 28 U.S.C. § 1395(c).

- 4. Venue is proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1355(b)(1)(A) because the acts and omissions giving rise to forfeiture took place in the Eastern District of Missouri. The defendant property was purchased and stored in the Eastern District of Missouri.
- 5. Venue is also proper pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1395(b) because the defendant property was seized in the Eastern District of Missouri.

### Statutory Framework

- 6. Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A) makes it unlawful for a person to possess a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime.
- 7. Pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(d), any firearm or ammunition involved in or used, or intended to be used, in a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A), is subject to forfeiture.
- 8. Title 21, United States Code, Section 841 makes it unlawful for a person, knowingly or intentionally, to manufacture, distribute, dispense or possess with intent to manufacture, distribute or dispense, a controlled substance.
- 9. Pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 881(a)(11), any firearm used or intended to be used to facilitate the transportation, sale, receipt, possession or concealment of a controlled substance, in a violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841, is subject to forfeiture.

# Facts Giving Rise to Forfeiture

10. On or about January 18, 2018, investigators with the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA") developed information that Robert McCall ("McCall") had travelled to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to drop off a shipment of bulk marijuana and was on his way back to St.

Louis. Investigators also learned that after St. Louis, McCall was planning on travelling to California.

- 11. Investigators discovered that McCall was travelling in a rental vehicle, a 2017 Ford Flex (hereafter, "Flex") and was planning to leave St. Louis on January 19, 2018. An alert was put out for McCall's vehicle.
- 12. On January 19, 2018, McCall was pulled over travelling westbound on Interstate 44 near mile maker 188 by a Phelps County, Missouri, officer for following too closely to the vehicle in front of him.
- 13. McCall told the officer he was travelling to California and had just left St. Louis. The officer asked for the car rental agreement and it stated the Flex had been rented in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on January 17, 2018.
- 14. The officer asked McCall if there was anything illegal in his vehicle, including large sums of currency. McCall said no. The officer asked for consent to search the vehicle and McCall said, "Yes, but I'm calling my lawyer." The officer wanted clarification, and stated he needed a yes or no answer regarding consent to search the Flex. McCall then said the officer could search the vehicle, but that he would need a dog. The officer requested a K-9 unit to respond due to the request.
- 15. McCall then stated there was "a lot of cash" in the vehicle and that he would show it to the officer. The officer waited for the second police unit to respond.
- 16. A certified drug detection canine was deployed for an open air sniff of the Flex and gave an affirmative response to the presence of a controlled substance.

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- 17. Officers discovered a gray carry-on bag in the rear of the Flex. McCall pointed to the bag and said the cash was located in that bag. The officer discovered bundles of U.S. Currency in the bag. A later official count of the U.S. Currency determined it to be \$151,849.00.
- 18. The vehicle was transported to the Phelps County Sheriff's Office. Investigators read McCall his rights and he agreed to answer questions. McCall said he travelled to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to drop off a shipment of bulk marijuana. McCall also stated he has been delivering bulk narcotics for the past fifteen years, travelling to various states to make deliveries.
  - 19. McCall signed a consent to search form for his apartment, located in St. Louis.
- 20. On the afternoon of January 19, 2018, investigators conducted a search of McCall's apartment and discovered THC oil, bags of marijuana and a Beretta 9mm handgun.
- 21. During the search, Brian Shields ("Shields") arrived at the apartment. Shields claimed to live in the apartment with McCall. However, Shields' name did not appear on the lease and no mail with his name was found in the residence. Investigators asked the property manager about the lease, and the manager told investigators that the complex did not allow persons who were not identified on the lease to occupy the residence.
- 22. Investigators searched the personal handbag of Shields and discovered a vehicle key. Investigators asked Shields if he had a vehicle and he stated he had a brown Chevrolet Equinox ("Equinox") parked behind the apartment building. Shields stated it belonged to a friend.
- 23. Shields was transported by investigators to the St. Louis DEA office. Investigators asked for consent to search his vehicle and Shields agreed and signed a Consent to Search form.
- 24. Investigators searched the Equinox, still located behind the apartment building, and discovered \$2,190.00 U.S. currency and a Smith & Wesson M&P 9mm handgun, SN: HMU3526,

located in the center console. A heat sealed plastic bag of suspected marijuana was also located on the rear passenger side floorboard.

25. The Equinox is registered to Rebecca and Kenneth Rapp.

# COUNT ONE - FORFEITURE 21 U.S.C. § 881(a)(11)

- 1. The United States incorporates by reference the allegations set forth in Paragraphs 1 to 25 above as if fully set forth herein.
- 2. The defendant property is a firearm that was discovered by law enforcement officers, located in the center console of a vehicle, discovered along with U.S. Currency and a controlled substance.
- 3. Based on the foregoing, the defendant property is subject to forfeiture pursuant to Title 21, United States Code, Section 881(a)(11) as a firearm used or intended to be used to facilitate the transportation, sale, receipt, possession, or concealment of a controlled substance.

# COUNT TWO - FORFEITURE (18 U.S.C. § 924(d))

- 4. The United States incorporates by reference the allegations set forth in Paragraphs 1 to 25 above as if fully set forth herein.
- 5. The defendant property was discovered by investigators in a vehicle, along with U.S. Currency and a controlled substance.
- 6. As such, the defendant property is subject to forfeiture, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(d), as any firearm or ammunition involved in or used, or intended to be used, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A).

### **Prayer for Relief**

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays that notice issue on the defendant property as described above; that due notice be given to all parties to appear and show cause why the forfeiture should not be decreed; that a warrant of arrest in rem be issued according to law; that judgment be entered declaring that the defendant property be forfeited to the United States of America for disposition according to law; and that the United States of America be granted such other relief as this Court may deem just and proper, together with the costs and disbursements of this action.

Respectfully submitted,

JEFFREY B. JENSEN United States Attorney

/s/ Stephen Casey
STEPHEN CASEY, #58879MO
Assistant United States Attorney

111 South Tenth Street, 20th Floor St. Louis, Missouri 63102

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#### **VERIFICATION**

I, Brian A. Chesser, hereby verify and declare under penalty of perjury that I am a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration, that I have read the foregoing Verified Complaint and know the contents thereof, and that the matters contained in the Verified Complaint are true to my own knowledge and belief.

The sources of my knowledge and information and the grounds of my belief are the official files and records of the United States, information supplied to me by other law enforcement officers, as well as my investigation of this case, together with others, as a Special Agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. ' 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: 8 29 19

(date)

BRIAN A. CHESSER

Special Agent

Drug Enforcement Administration

SJS 44 (Rev. 11/04)

# Case: 4:19-cv-02462 Dec $\#_{L}^{1}$ Co $\#_{L}^{1}$ Page: 1 of 2 PageID #: 8

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE REVERSE OF THE FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS		DEFENDANTS			
United States of America			Smith & Wesson M&P 9 Shield Pistol, SN: HMU3526		
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)		NOTE: IN LAN	County of Residence of First Listed Defendant  (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)  NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED.		
AUSA Stephen Casey	Address, and Telephone Number)	Attorneys (If Known)			
U. S. Attorney's Of II. BASIS OF JURISD		 	PRINCIPAL PARTIES	(Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff	
■ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff	☐ 3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)	(For Diversity Cases Only)	TF DEF  1 1	and One Box for Defendant)  PTF DEF rincipal Place	
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity  (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)	Citizen of Another State	1 2		
		Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	1 3	□ 6 □ 6	
IV. NATURE OF SUIT	(Place an "X" in One Box Only)  TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES	
□ 110 Insurance □ 120 Marine □ 130 Miller Act □ 140 Negotiable Instrument □ 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment □ 151 Medicare Act □ 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excl. Veterans) □ 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits □ 160 Stockholders' Suits □ 190 Other Contract □ 195 Contract Product Liability □ 196 Franchise ■ REAL PROPERTY □ 210 Land Condemnation □ 220 Foreclosure □ 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment □ 245 Tort Product Liability □ 290 All Other Real Property	PERSONAL INJURY  □ 310 Airplane □ 315 Airplane Product Liability □ 320 Assault, Libel & Slander □ 330 Federal Employers' Liability □ 340 Marine □ 345 Marine Product Liability □ 350 Motor Vehicle □ 7350 Motor Vehicle □ 7360 Other Personal □ 7370 Other Fraud □ 7370 Othe	☐ 690 Other  LABOR ☐ 710 Fair Labor Standards Act ☐ 720 Labor/Mgmt. Relations ☐ 730 Labor/Mgmt.Reporting & Disclosure Act ☐ 740 Railway Labor Act ☐ 790 Other Labor Litigation ☐ 791 Empl. Ret. Inc. Security Act	☐ 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 ☐ 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157  PROPERTY RIGHTS ☐ 820 Copyrights ☐ 830 Patent ☐ 840 Trademark  SOCIAL SECURITY ☐ 861 HIA (1395ff) ☐ 862 Black Lung (923) ☐ 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) ☐ 864 SSID Title XVI ☐ 865 RSI (405(g)) ☐ FEDERAL TAX SUITS ☐ 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) ☐ 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	□ 400 State Reapportionment □ 410 Antitrust □ 430 Banks and Banking □ 450 Commerce □ 460 Deportation □ 470 Racketeer Influenced and	
■1 Original □2 R	an "X" in One Box Only) emoved from atte Court	Reinstated or Reopened anoth (speci			
VI. CAUSE OF ACTIO	Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are 21 USC 881; 18 USC 924 (d)  Brief description of cause: Forfeiture of Smith & Wesson		•		
VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:	CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER F.R.C.P. 23	DEMAND \$	CHECK YES only JURY DEMAND	if demanded in complaint:  "Yes  No	
VIII. RELATED CASI IF ANY	E(S) (See instructions): JUDGE		DOCKET NUMBER		
DATE 08/29/2019	SIGNATURE OF ATTO /s/ Stephen C				
FOR OFFICE USE ONLY  RECEIPT # A	MOUNT APPLYING IFP	JUDGE	MAG. JUI	DGE	

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#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44

#### Authority For Civil Cover Sheet

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- I. (a) Plaintiffs-Defendants. Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
- (b) County of Residence. For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
- (c) Attorneys. Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction. The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.C.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.

United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here.

United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.

Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.

Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.)

- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties. This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- IV. Nature of Suit. Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If the nature of suit cannot be determined, be sure the cause of action, in Section VI below, is sufficient to enable the deputy clerk or the statistical clerks in the Administrative Office to determine the nature of suit. If the cause fits more than one nature of suit, select the most definitive.
- V. Origin. Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.

Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.

Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441. When the petition for removal is granted, check this box.

Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing date.

Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date.

Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.

Multidistrict Litigation. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407. When this box is checked, do not check (5) above.

Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment. (7) Check this box for an appeal from a magistrate judge's decision.

- VI. Cause of Action. Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity**. Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553

  Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service
- VII. Requested in Complaint. Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.

Demand. In this space enter the dollar amount (in thousands of dollars) being demanded or indicate other demand such as a preliminary injunction.

Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.

VIII. Related Cases. This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.

# UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

) ) ) Case No. ) )
FILING FORM
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EQUIVALENT COMPLAINT, WAS
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on provided above is true and correct.
Signature of Filing Party

#### UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,	)
Plaintiff,	) )
v.	) No.
SMITH AND WESSON, M&P 9 SHIELD PISTOL, SERIAL NO. HMU3526;	) ) )
Defendant.	)

#### **WARRANT FOR ARREST OF PROPERTY**

TO: THE UNITED STATES MARSHAL AND/OR ANY OTHER DULY AUTHORIZED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

Whereas, on August 29, 2019, the United States of America filed a Verified Complaint for Civil Forfeiture in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri, against the above-named defendant property, alleging that said property is subject to seizure and civil forfeiture to the United States for the reasons mentioned in the complaint; and

WHEREAS, the defendant property is currently in the possession, custody, or control of the United States; and

WHEREAS, in these circumstances, Supplemental Rule G(3)(b)(i) directs the Clerk of the Court to issue an arrest warrant in rem for the arrest of the defendant property; and

WHEREAS, Supplemental Rule G(3)(c) provides that the warrant of arrest in rem must be delivered to a person or organization authorized to execute it;

NOW THEREFORE, you are hereby commanded to arrest the above-named defendant property by serving a copy of this warrant on the custodian in whose possession, custody, or

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control the property is presently found, and to use whatever means may be appropriate to protect and maintain it in your custody until further order of this Court,

YOU ARE FURTHER COMMANDED, promptly after execution of this process, to file the same in this Court with your return thereon, identifying the individuals upon whom copies were served and the manner employed.

GREGORY J. LINHARES, CLERK United States District Court

By:	
·	Deputy Clerk
Date	